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TS-142631 ✓  
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence 21 November 1955  
SUBJECT : Project AQUATONE - Summary

1. The project was approved on 1 December 1954. Work was started on the airframe, engines, cameras [redacted] within a matter of weeks on the basis of oral understandings; contracts followed.

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2. The development and production of specialized equipment is in progress in nine different fields as follows:

High altitude long-range aircraft -- Lockheed Aircraft Company

An improved model of the J-57 Jet Engine -- Pratt & Whitney  
*P-371 P-312*

Optics and cameras -- Perkin-Elmer Company and Hycon Manufacturing Company

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[redacted]  
Specialized film and processing techniques -- Eastman Kodak Co.

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Electronic and celestial navigational systems -- Ramo-Wooldridge Co.  
and Baird Associates

New high altitude pressure suit and other personal equipment -- The Air Research and Development Command

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3. Chronology:

a. Construction of test site authorized in late May; in use by mid-July.

b. First aircraft flown 5 August; fourth delivered to the test base 21 November 1955.

c. First camera configuration flown end of September; second test flown beginning early in November; third due in December.

[REDACTED]

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4. Performance: Aircraft has attained altitude [REDACTED] 70,000 feet on six occasions. Cameras and electronic gear are functioning in a satisfactory fashion. Principal technical problems:

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a. Fuel control to ensure reliable engine operation at altitude.

b. Maintenance of air pressure in equipment bay sufficient for reliable camera operation.

c. Navigational systems and techniques.

All three believed to be on their way to solution.

5. Status: Agreement with the Air Force on organization and lines of command concluded on 2 August 1955 provides for joint task force, predominantly civilian, technically within CIA but subject to direct control by Quarles and Twining on one side; DCI and General Cabell on the other.

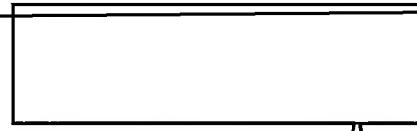
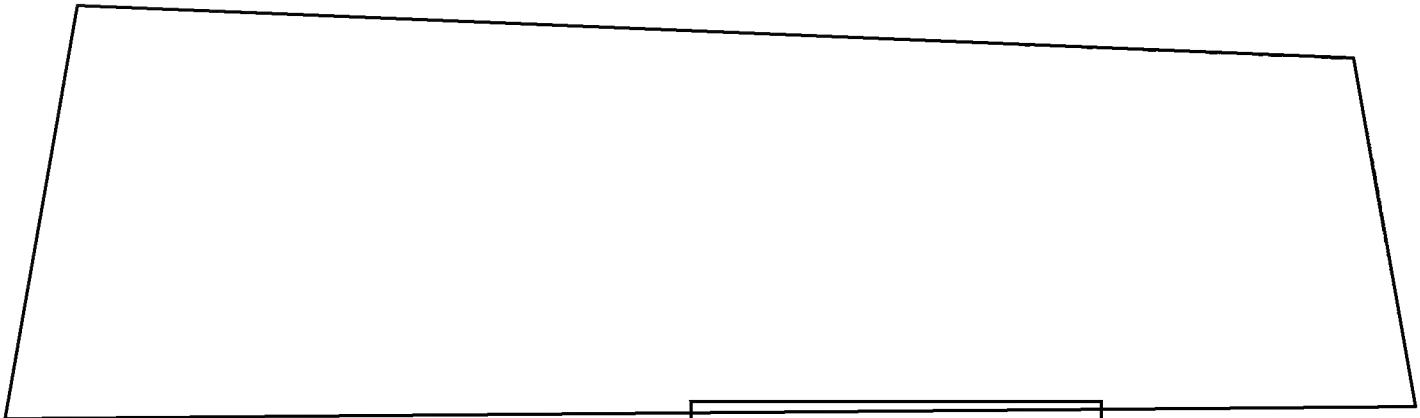
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RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.  
Project Director